

Big Bell companies are blocking access to their networks and stopping competition before it can even begin for local, long-distance, the Internet, cell phone services, and new technologies like making calls over the Internet. If these mergers go through, only two companies will control 90 percent of the consumer market. These mergers would put the interests of large corporations over the interests of individual consumers, and you have a duty to block them. In a world of increased competition, consumers could be enjoying unlimited local and long-distance telephone calls, as well as high-speed Internet access, for just \$40 -- \$15 for community Internet and \$25 for unlimited phone calls over the Internet. But today, this costs about \$90 more than double the price! The FCC should block these mergers and find new ways to bring down the costs of these services, particularly high-speed Internet which has become essential to modern life and is the gateway to exciting new! technologies, like making phone calls on the Internet and streaming in video over the Internet. America is falling behind the rest of the world in broadband deployment. We are now 16th, far behind countries like Japan and Korea, which have opened up the building blocks of broadband phone and cable lines to competitors. This merger would only worsen these problems and therefore must be blocked. They would stifle competition, raise prices, and lead to fewer choices, making the problem worse, not better. The prices on my cell phones keep going up as well as the prices for the plans. It is horrible. I remember getting my cell phone for free and a plan as low as \$10 a month. Now, new phones cost between \$100 and \$500 and my bill every month is at least \$80 but has been as high as \$120. If you let these mergers continue, the prices will continue to go up, and the number of bankrupt and out of work consumers will continue to skyrocket as well. How can we keep a !

solid economy when there are more and more lay offs, less and less jobs available, and higher prices on basic consumer goods? It is a recipe for disaster and I plead for you to consider enforcing the Anti-Trust laws that have seemed to go the way of extinction. If not, the consumers that keep this economy alive may become extinct.